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Économie Sociale. Par LÉON SAY. Exposition Universelle de 1889, Groupe de l'Économie Sociale, Rapport Général. Paris, Guillaumin et Cie, 1891. — 438 pp.

One of the most interesting and significant features of the Paris Exposition of 1889 was that known as the Exposition of Social Economy. The extensive buildings devoted to the comparative museum of social and industrial remedies and ideals stood for a distinct recognition of the moral element in the century of material progress to which the exposition as a whole was largely dedicated. The purpose of this unique sociological museum was both popular and scientific. On the one hand, its statistical tables, charts, models, books, mural decorations, *etc.*, must be so arranged as to impress the careless, world's-fair-visiting public with the essential relation between the material, intellectual and moral advance of the worker and the general advance in science, art and industry. On the other hand, all this information must be so collected and disposed as to give the sociological student reliable scientific data for generalization. As a popular educational enterprise the verdict of success has already been given; but to the more serious student, who found the surroundings not wholly congenial to work and left the Exposition of Social Economy rather bewildered by the great mass of heterogeneous information, M. Say's *General Report* will be of the greatest service.

Obviously it would be unreasonable to expect of a single volume any detailed analysis or description of the documents and institutions represented in the sixteen sections into which the Exposition of Social Economy was divided. For such particulars the reader is referred to the special report prepared for each section by the president of the committee in charge. M. Say's report confines itself to the most important general facts, — devoting a chapter to the peculiarities of each section and the conclusions to be drawn from its special report.

It is difficult to indicate concisely the character of sections so diverse in scope as to include every organized attempt, by philanthropists, by employers or by the state, to ameliorate the condition of laborers. Roughly, however, the sixteen sections are divided into six topical groups. The first group is concerned primarily with efforts to increase the share of laborers in the gross or net product of industry. It includes, among others, the sections covering wages, profit-sharing and co-operative production, trade organizations, technical instruction and the comparison of large and small industry. The second group deals with the various institutions of *prévoyance*, such as mutual aid societies, old-age pensions, life and accident insurance and savings banks. The third group embraces the sections devoted to projects for lessening the

cost of living, as well as the cost of production in certain industries, *e.g.* distributive co-operation. The fourth group is devoted to the possibilities of physical and moral improvement by means of better homes, better opportunities for physical and mental recreation — workingmen's dwellings, clubs, *etc.* The fifth group comprises a great variety of institutions created by employers in favor of their employees, brought together in Section XIV. Finally, the sixth group, which was added to the original fifteen as a special study of state socialism and individual initiative, is likewise represented by a single section, entitled: "*Intervention Économique des Pouvoirs Publics.*"

Naturally many valuable contributions to the literature of the exposition were so comprehensive in character as to belong about equally well in any or all the sections. To cover such cases an outside section was created for the work of some fifteen exhibitors. It is to these general treatises that M. Say devotes the first and most exhaustive chapter of his book. This chapter constitutes in fact a special report upon these fifteen exhibitors; the following chapters are more like reviews of the reports already made by presidents of the sections.

The exposition did not possess to any considerable extent that "universal" or international character which it was hoped to secure. Belgium, Italy and England were well represented, though the English trade unions were wanting, and the building societies, friendly societies and the like made an inadequate exhibit. The United States was conspicuously absent in certain sections, despite the enthusiasm evoked by the federal and state bureaus of labor statistics. Switzerland, Sweden, Russia and Brazil were barely represented, but nothing more. Most lamentable of all, however, was the persistent refusal of Germany to participate. The student of sociology will appreciate this loss when attempting to use the facts for generalization in regard to state intervention, not to mention a score of institutions upon which German experience is peculiarly rich and instructive. Only two Germans appear in the list of exhibitors.

It is not to be supposed that the discussions presented by M. Say merely served the purpose of a directory of names, institutions and publications. On the contrary, the résumés and the citations frequently give the gist of the memoirs in question, and are often very interesting, in spite of an inevitable incoherence. So, for example, the reader gets from the first chapter a bird's-eye view of the single French *départements* in their industrial aspects, or of the educational, co-operative and socialist propaganda of a country like Belgium, with a graphic sketch of national characteristics. Moreover, so far as may be, materials are furnished for rough statistical comparisons as to changes in wages and cost of living in different localities; and apart from any question of

general conclusiveness, these estimates have a descriptive value suited to the purposes for which they were devised.

"*La paix sociale*" and moral considerations of the highest order play an important part in all these discussions. Witness the sentiments quoted from time to time with special approval: Social economy cannot rest content with "simple justice;" "User d'un homme et user d'une machine seront des choses éternellement différentes aux yeux de la morale," *etc., etc.* The tendency of the work in questions of economic theory, appears incidentally in a theoretical and statistical refutation of the wage-fund theory and the "brazen law" of Lassalle; in a demonstration of the necessary persistence of the fundamental idea of wages in systems of remuneration; and in optimistic generalizations as to the benign influence upon manual labor of the universal tendency to concentration of labor and capital. But the book is not an economic treatise in any sense which insures coherent or consistent proof of conclusions announced; neither do the limits of the volume make it reasonable to expect a complete statement of the facts upon which inductions are based. At best we must accept the results as an abridged version of many separate studies, pleasantly tinged with the compiler's personal opinion, —a sort of "review of reviews," with the characteristic virtues and some of the defects of such work.

In conclusion it may not be irrelevant to raise the general question as to how far the purposes of those in charge of this sociological exposition have been didactic rather than impartially scientific — to what extent the desire to make the exposition serve the purpose of educational propaganda has preponderated over more strictly scholarly interests. And here it should again be borne in mind that, with all its cosmopolitan ambitions, the Exposition of Social Economy was pre-eminently French, and pre-eminently addressed to the great French people by men who were statesmen as well as scholars, who brought to the theoretical study of social philosophy practical and patriotic convictions as to desirable and undesirable tendencies in the national life. Throughout M. Say's report the influence of this personal equation is not difficult to trace, whenever there is any opportunity to throw weight into the balance in favor of individual initiative and voluntary self-help.

EDWARD CUMMINGS.